From: perf@memberclicks-mail.net on behalf of PERF Daily Clips
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Subject: PERF Daily Clips - January 17, 2019
Date: Thursday, January 17, 2019 4:07:19 AM

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PRIVACY ISSUES

San Jose Mercury News: Government can't force people to unlock phones using facial recognition, fingerprints: federal judge

A federal judge in Oakland ruled that law enforcement agencies cannot force people to use biometric features such as facial-recognition to unlock their phones and other devices in a case that highlights the fight between Big Tech and law enforcement over users' privacy.

GUN REGULATIONS

Baltimore Sun: Sheriff: Maryland's 'red flag' law prompted gun seizures after four 'significant threats' against schools

Maryland's judiciary fielded 302 requests to remove firearms from individuals over the first three months of the state's "red flag" gun safety law - including five cases involving threats against schools. "These orders are not only being issued appropriately; they are saving lives," Montgomery County Sheriff Darren Popkin, a leader in the Maryland Sheriffs' Association who helped develop the law, testified Tuesday before the House of Delegates' Judiciary Committee.

TECHNOLOGY

Houston Chronicle: Houston police team up with Ring app to tackle crime

The Houston Police Department announced Monday that it is joining Ring's mobile app, Neighbors, in a move officials hope will reduce crime and improve safety in neighborhoods across the city, even as department officials complain of low staffing levels. The HPD partnership with Ring, a rapidly growing home surveillance company that sells video doorbells and similar products, would help the police department communicate more effectively in real time with residents as crimes occur, Houston Police Burglary and Theft Division Commander Glenn Yorek said.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: $500K foundation grant to Pittsburgh police to help fund domestic violence unit

Pittsburgh is poised to expand its police response to domestic violence threats and crimes, backed by a philanthropic gift, Mayor Bill Peduto's office announced Tuesday. Some $500,000 over five years from the local Nina Baldwin Fisher Foundation would cover three new positions in 2019: a sergeant, a detective specialist and a civilian clerical specialist, all focused on domestic violence, the administration said. An existing police position - a detective's slot - would be designated for the unit, as well.

RECRUITING

Minnesota Public Radio: No black women? St. Paul cops adjust recruiting tactics

When Sgt. Val Namen retired last September, the St. Paul Police Department lost its last female African-American officer. The 628-member force consists of 12 percent women - but no black woman cop for the first time in 46 years. The department has been deliberate about recruiting lately. Deputy Chief Mary Nash said department leaders are also exploring different ways of shortening the academic requirements in Minnesota - which include a costly skills-training portion required by the Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards (POST).

DRONES

NBC Southern California: Los Angeles Police Department deploys drone for first time

The Los Angeles Police Department announced Tuesday that it deployed a drone for the first time during a barricade situation last week, under a one-year pilot program authorized by the Police Commission last July.

South Florida Sun Sentinel: Here's why Fort Lauderdale wants a $100 million police station

The elevators are ancient, the air conditioner breaks on a regular basis, the roof leaks, the offices are cramped, the basement floods - and so does the parking lot. Fort Lauderdale police officers and the police chief say there are plenty of reasons they're asking for a new police headquarters. On March 12, Fort Lauderdale voters will make the decision.

OPIOIDS

The Hill: Op-ed by Springfield, MO Police Chief Paul Williams, Shepherdsville, KY Police Chief Rick McCubbin, and Niagara County, NY Deputy Chief Daniel Engert: People addicted to opioids don't need to be in jail, they need help

Time is running out for legislators to seize a rare bipartisan opportunity to extend support for local law enforcement's efforts to help those affected by the opioid crisis. As police officers, we have become the frontline dealing with the effects of opioid addiction and overdose, but we are not mental health professionals. We do not have the training and resources to respond

to these crises. Our communities are lucky, we have access to a new kind of clinic that provides expanded capacity to support our officers responding to people with addictions and mental illness. Unfortunately, without swift action by Congress to extend the program in 2019, we will lose all the gains we have made.

UNITED KINGDOM

The Economist: Mike Barton runs England's best police force. What sets him apart?

If you ask his cops, they tell you Mike Barton is forthright, daring and a little domineering. Mostly, though, they think "The Chief" is crazy. "He's a nutter," one officer says. "But he's our nutter." Between 2010 and 2016, only four of the 42 police forces in England and Wales suffered greater funding cuts than Durham. Mr Barton now has 1,140 officers, down by 25% since the peak in 2010. Yet the police watchdog has graded Durham "outstanding", the highest of four ratings, at effectiveness and efficiency for the past three years. Its crime-detection rates are the highest in the country and academics lavish Mr Barton, who has been chief constable since 2012, with gongs. The 61-year-old says cuts forced him to reshape the force and chop unmotivated cops. Amid chatter that he will soon retire, The Economist spent two days with Mr Barton and his bobbies to understand his approach.

POLICE EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS

NBC Columbus (OH): Columbus Police Chief Kim Jacobs reflects on career in law enforcement

As she gets ready to leave office, Columbus Division of Police Chief Kim Jacobs says she does so with pride in the job she did and the team she led. After 39 years behind the badge, Chief Jacobs is just weeks away from retirement. She made history in Columbus, shattering the glass ceiling. She says her biggest points of pride are the men and women on the force and the community they serve.

POLICE EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS

Lafayette (IN) Journal & Courier: Harris tapped as new West Lafayette police chief

Troy Harris steps into the role of West Lafayette police chief at the beginning of next month.

Harris, who currently is deputy chief, filled in for Chief Jason Dombkowski, who took a leave of absence at the beginning of July to campaign full time during his unsuccessful bid to become Tippecanoe County sheriff.

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